

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 1, 2000

overabundance of white males, but things come to my attention which require me to address them and I'm going to address something by way of a fable and those to whom it is directed will understand. The "meeses", mice, are not baby rats. Mice are little creatures who, when they are adults, don't get as large as rats, but they were all sitting around and concerned because the cat had been decimating their numbers. So, finally, some of the young mice and some of those that were even more timid than the run-of-the-mill mouse said, what we should do is find a way to let us know when the cat is out there. And, as they talked about this and brought their best thoughts to bear, they decided that they should put a bell around the cat's neck. Then, whenever they heard the bell ringing, they would know that the cat was on the scene and danger was lurking and they could head for their hole, as mice tend to do. So they were very gleeful and happy because they had arrived at a means whereby the cat could be controlled. There would be no more depredations by the cat and the numbers of the mice would not be diminished by the cat. So they went on and on with this. Then an old rat, who had been around a long time, said, I hate to rain on your parade but I have one question to ask and you all know what that question is. And they said, what is the question, old timer? He said, who shall bell the cat? And then the message came home to them. So, as Gerry Adams, who is representing Sinn Féin in this temporary government that has been thrown together in Ireland, said, when they asked him, can you get the IRA to disarm, he said the following. I'm going to read a paragraph from this article that was in this morning's paper. "Over the last few days, Adams has complained publicly that he is having trouble dealing with IRA members on disarmament and that threats or deadlines from the Protestant camp do not make things easier for him." And this is what I want people to mark well. "When the unionists go hardball, that just makes it harder for us to resolve any issues," Adams told the BBC. Asked if he can guarantee IRA disarmament, Adams was blunt, saying, 'No, I can't.'" So, sometimes on the floor of any legislative body hardball is played, but when those who decide to initiate the game of hardball do so, they should understand that there's going to be something coming back. So if the Governor or anybody else is displeased what I say on these confirmations or the way I comport myself on any other issue before us, let that person bell the cat. But, remember,